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ABSTRACT

Two disciplines, Montessori education and Jungian psychoanalysis, are connected by comparing the lives of Maria Montessori and C.G. Jung and their early professional and philosophical influences. The historical associations of the Montessori philosophy dating from the 1920's and 1930's are described, including the development of Montessori's views from the early theories of Jung and Freud. Specific psychoanalytic concepts of Montessori and Jung are compared and contrasted: namely, the ideas of the archetypes, the spiritual embryo, and sensitive periods. The author's personal experience with putting these ideas to work in the classroom or the psychological consulting room, based on her training as a Montessori teacher and a Jungian analyst, are described. (DST)

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MONTESSORI EDUCATION FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Susanne Short, April 21, 1985

This talk comes out of my own experience in observing children as a parent, as a Montessori teacher, and as a Jungian psychoanalyst. In it, I will refer to C. G. Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist, and to Maria Montessori, who, in her work in the education of children, foreshadowed, if not paralleled, many important developments in the field of child psychotherapy. I don't think I need to emphasize how much ahead of her time Montessori was. The Montessori approach offers wisdom about the structuring not only of the educational environment, but the therapeutic environment. We all know that Montessori created educational environments that promote psychic health. Her methods of observation of the child, her regard for the prepared environment, and her emphasis on the personhood of the directoress are helpful tools not only for the teacher but for the child psychotherapist as well.

Many people familiar with both Jung and Montessori have seen the similarities in their thought. This morning I would like to show you some of these points of connection, particularly the basis for Montessori's thought that depth psychology provides. This is especially true of her thinking about observation, the prepared environment, and how a teacher can prepare herself for her task. Because the majority of Montessori teachers are women, I have chosen to use the feminine pronouns, "she," "her," etc., in this paper to avoid the clumsier constructions such as "he or she," "his/her," etc.

For Montessori, education had a much broader meaning than the general interpretation of the term, a meaning much closer to the root of the word. In Latin, "educare" means to lead out, to bring up, what is already there. Thus,

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in Montessori's view, the teacher is as much a therapeutic facilitator as someone who "puts information into" the child. Montessori believed that a child is born with what it needs for development; if its growth is not inhibited, natural development will take place. When we think of education as drawing out what is innately in us, then we see the true spirit of the word "education."

Some of you may not know much about Jung, so I'd like to tell you a little bit about him.

In 1875, when Maria Montessori was five years old, Carl Gustave Jung was born in Switzerland, where his father was the pastor of a church. Some very interesting things about Jung's life will have particular appeal to us as Montessori teachers. When Jung was in his eighties, he wrote his autobiography, and discussed his early childhood memories. Two vignettes stand out in my mind as parallel to what Montessori teachers find important in the educational possibilities of a young child because they deal with sensory experiences. Jung recalled sitting in his high chair as an infant and being aware of the distinct characteristic smell of milk -- now this was in his eighties -- and he felt this was an extremely important memory. He also remembered having had a sense of indescribable well-being as he lay in his baby carriage and saw the sun glittering through the leaves and blossoms of the bushes. Though Jung did not himself pursue these memories as a child psychologist, in his life as ar individual these were important experiences for him and he drew on them for strength and awareness. One can only imagine, then, that in his work with clients these issues also came up. That is perhaps why Jungian psychology crosses modalities in treatment. Sometimes Jungian analysts and their patients talk, sometimes we draw, sometimes we paint, sometimes we

visualize. Jung, like Montessori, was a person for whom the senses were both ways of education and ways of vital human experience.

It is also interesting to note the way in which the life and work of Jung parallel the life and work of Montessori. Jung began and finished his medical training not long after Montessori did hers. Jung's, of course, was in Basel and Montessori's in Rome. One fact about their lives that interested me was that when Jung went to the la Salpetriere hospital in Paris to study psychopathology with Pierre Janet he was probably exposed to the same spirit that Montessori was influenced by as she followed the work of Sequin, who himself years before had worked at this very same hospital.

Both Montessori and Jung became intensely interested in the way the human mind works. They both served apprenticeships in mental hospitals. Montessori treated patients and did clinical consultations for nervous diseases and mental illness. She visited the Rome asylums for the insane. Jung did his work at the Burgholzli mental hospital in Zurich. Interestingly, both did their initial and important research on the psychology of paranoia -- Jung, in terms of the "Psychology of Dementia Praecox" (1906) C.W. 3., which is the old name for what we call schizophrenia today. Jung's early paper, "The Contents of the Psychosis," (1908) C.W. 3, directly parallels Montessori's own doctoral dissertation on the nature and substance of paranoid delusions titled, "A Clinical Contribution to the Study of Delusions of Persecution."

The underlying similarity of spirit between these two researchers was their intense desire to root out the clear meaning and positive value of the psychotic experience. Jung's dominant interest was what actually takes place in the mentally ill and he searched for the meaning of psychotic behavior and utterances. He wanted to see "how the human mind reacted to the sight of its

own destruction." He came to realize that "paranoid ideas and hallucinations contain a germ of meaning -- a personality, a life history, a pattern of hopes and desires lie behind the psychosis." (M.D.R. p. 127) This paralleled Montessori's curiosity about whether the mentally defective child could learn. What is striking about the two of them is that not only were they both initially concerned with mentally disabled people -- either the mentally retarded or the chronically mentally ill, -- but they both viewed these people as real people whose illnesses revealed something about the state and nature of their souls.

Jung said "we must follow nature as a guide, and what the doctor then does is less a question of treatment than of developing the creative possibilities of the patient himself." (C.W. 16--582) Montessori said that "children had concealed within themselves a vital secret capable of lifting the veil that covered the human soul." She felt children carried within themselves something which, if discovered, would help adults solve their own individual and social problems. What Jung and Montessori both saw in the people they treated was the latent creativity of the soul.

Both evolved from this initial clinical work with disabled people into work with so-called normal people to formulate a world view of the depths of man's soul. They both went on to discovered universal principles of life, a larger perspective that was the unfolding natural capacity of self-discovery which led to our divine spiritual nature.

What was most significant about their work was their emphasis on <u>observation</u> to discover what was wrong, and their ability to help individuals to become what they most uniquely and innately were. Both in their own ways were visionaries, that is, they saw beyond phenomena into the depths, but they

were not without their practical sides. It is well know that Montessori was an empiricist; she was a scientist, a pragmatist. She developed strategies of teaching for work with people who were deemed uneducable. Yet, her accomplishments came about not only through her belief in their innate creative pctential, but through trial and error and scientific method. Jung, in his own way, at first intensely interested in the meaning of psychotic process, also put into practice, in an empirical fashion, through his own analytical work, the very same approach of bringing out what is already there in a person. This later developed as his theory of individuation.

These two great pioneers belonged to the same moment of history. The reach of their vision and range of accomplishment changed the way the world thought about education and psychology. They brought new and lasting ideas to the world. They were highly original, creative thinkers who saw the world in a new way. Both were explorers of unknown terrain. They were like midwives, discovering what was already there in the world and bringing it forth. They were not intent solely on formulating theory or preaching an idea; they brought forth ideas and showed what already existed. We know that the purpose of Montessori education is not to force a child to learn a fact but to create the way in which a child can learn for himself, using is own innate potential.

I want to turn now to some early history to see how these two disciplines, Montessori education and psychoanalysis, were first connected.

In the Vienna of the late 1920's and early 30's there were strong ties between education and psychoanalysis. Montessori's ideas were enhanced by her contact with this movement. Nowhere is this better exemplified than in a letter she received from Freud. I quote:

My dear Frau Montessori:

It gave me great pleasure to receive a letter from you. Since I have been preoccupied for years with the study of the child's psyche, I am in deep sympathy with your humanitarian and understanding endeavors, and my daughter, who is an analytical pedagogue, considers herself one of your disciples.

I would be very pleased to sign my name beside yours in the appeal for the foundation of a little institute as planned by Frau Schaxel. The resistance my name may arouse among the public will have to be conquered by the brilliance that radiates from yours.

Yours very sincerely,

Freud

In the years between the first and second world wars many people were interested in bringing these two disciplines together. One of the first to do this was Lili Peller, who eventually introduced Anna Freud and Maria Montessori to each other. Lili Peller had studied psychology in Vienna and in 1921 she went to London to study with Dr. Montessori. When she returned to Vienna she opened a Montessori school with a staff of five people. Later she developed a two-year training course in the Montessori method which culminated in a four-month study with Dr. Montessori herself. One of the students who took the training was Erik Erikson. Bruno Bettelheim's wife, as you may know, was also a Montessori teacher.

This Montessori school and training program taught biology, dance, graphic arts, and architectural planning; finally psycho- analysis was integrated into the program. With one exception, all of the teachers in the school were in analysis. When one of the teachers who had worked in the school told me that, I was both stunned and amused. Just think for a moment what psychoanalysis is

-- the return to childhood -- I don't know if any of you have ever been analyzed or have lived with an one who was being analyzed. What one does in analysis is regress and reexperience one's own childhood with all of its anger, fear, and pain. So in the environment of that school, you would have two kinds of children: the real children and the adult children -- all of the teachers. It must have been interesting! Nowadays we are so psychologically aware that analysis would not be a requirement. Would it?

The Bauhaus-oriented architect, Franz Schuster, later built a school for the group and many outstanding teachers taught there. At biweekly seminars with Anna Freud the students and teachers were taught how to observe the children and how to report in a consultation. Many of the Montessori teachers went on to take the training for teachers at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Institute. Lili Peller was in the first training class for analysts taught by Anna Freud. Psychanalysis defined and clarified the role of education.

At the time my own life took me from being a Montessori teacher into training as an analyst, I didn't know this bit of history and so did not realize I was following a path travelled by my Montessori predecessors.

It is also interesting that Anna Freud, who is now counted second only to her father as one of the guiding lights of psycho-analytic thinking, had her first opportunity to put her own ideas into practice at Lili Peller's model school. As you may know, Lili Peller went on to become a Freudian analyst, eventually practicing in New York. What is more important for us here is the value that Anna Freud placed on Lili Peller's skills as an integrator of psychoanalysis and Montessori teaching method. Lili Peller's stature as a creative thinker in the field of education and analysis is legendary.

Perhaps one of the reasons that child psychotherapy developed a Freudian rather than a Jungian orientation (aside from Jung's avowed concentration on the second half of life) is that Lili Peller and other Montessori pioneers encouraged psychoanalysis for themselves and for the children they worked with: to them, given their relationship with Anna Freud, psychoanalysis was Freudian analysis. My stated purpose in this talk is simply to point out the ways in which Jungian psychoanalysis, which is one branch of the general field of psychoanalysis, is also very applicable to Montessori's ideas.

Although Jung and Montessori were contemporaries, there is no evidence they ever met. However, Montessori's views were actually much more in harmony with those of Jung than of Freud. Perhaps that accounts for the fact that her work with Anna Freud did not flourish as Montessori had expected. I would like to show how both Jung and Montessori went beyond these early theories of Freud. Though this is background material, all-important historically, I hope to show how Jung's work is a further development of this Vienna collaboration.

I would like to go on now to some of Montessori's criticisms of Freud. First of all, she felt that he restricted himself to the study of pathology rather than normal cases, and that he limited himself to such ideas as infant sexuality and the influence of emotional conflicts in early life on later development. (Montessori seems to have accepted the latter idea, at least tacitly, because it is implied in her desire to fashion a new way to work with children so this <u>disease of the soul</u> would not occur.)

We can see in Montessori's own writing how she felt about psychoanalysis; I quote directly from the <u>Secret of Childhood</u>, pages 10-11.

> "Psychoanalysis has opened up a hitherto unknown field of research, enabling us to penetrate into the secrets of the subconscious. It can help us understand the contributions that can be given by the secret life

> of the child. Psychoanalysis has broken through what was once thought impassable, the rind of consciousness, just as men finally passed through the Pillars of Hercules, which ancient thought once set as the limits of the world. If psychoanalysis had not sounded the ocean of the subconscious, it would be difficult to explain how a child's mind could give us a deeper understanding of human problems. It made a brilliant study of the power the subconscious has over the actions of men. But psychoanalysis has not succeeded in exploring this unknown world. It has hardly gone beyond the Pillars of Hercules and has not ventured out into the expanses of the ocean. A prejudice similar to that of the ancient Greeks limited Freud to the study of pathology rather than normal cases...The new psychology is as a consequence based largely on personal experiences in dealing with abnormal cases. Freud beheld the ocean, but he did not explore it, and he portrayed it as a stormy strait. For the exploration of the immense reality of the subconscious, there is obviously the need for something more."

Montessori is talking here about the need to go beyond a limited idea of the subconscious to the deeper layers of the unconscious, the archaic heritage of man. Jung did sound the waters of the unconscious; he went beyond the Pillars of Hercules. He plunged into that deep ocean of the unconscious himself and then came back to tell us what was there. What was there was what we have come to know as archetypes. Montessori's belief that there must be some further understanding of the human soul which takes into account the innate potential is precisely what Jung fulfilled. The idea of this innate structure is the very basis for Jung's evolution from and beyond Freud, the very reason he broke with Freud in 1912. The world beyond, as it were, that separated Jung and Freud, was exactly the world Montessori knew and believed in. It is the world of what Jung called the archetypes.

Let me try to define archetypes. Both Jung and Montessori believed that there are potentials alive within the human psyche that have to be evoked and enabled, patterns of perception, apperception, patterns of knowing the world

emotionally, cognitively, and visually. These are attitudes, ideas, and ways of assimilating experience. The interaction between the individual and the world activates these patterns. The patterns are the inner potential of the person. The archetypal world does not actualize itself, but it is present and it becomes actualized in life. Deep within the psyche of every person is this vast unknown world. "Actually all typical universal human manifestations of life, whether biological, psychobiological or spiritual, rest on an archetypal foundation. The archetypes are reflections of instinctive, psychically necessary reactions to certain situations. The archetype appears as an archetypal image, representation or process. They can appear as modes of action or reaction or the progress from one phase and experience to another."

Now, how do we see this in relation to Montessori's work? To explain this idea of the child's own construction or creation of itself, Montessori said that it must have within, before birth, a <u>pattern</u> for its psychic unfolding. She called this inborn psychic reality of the child "the spiritual embryo." But she felt this must become "incarnated" by the help of the child's own will, by inner liberty and freedom of action. Another archetypal pattern is what Montessori called the sensitive periods for learning. So we see that there is a grounded psychological basis for the principle of "sensitive periods" that we work with every day in the classroom and that we observe in the life of the child. I don't need to describe or define the sensitive periods to you; I merely point out that Jung and Montessori were talking about the same thing.

Montessori never mentions Jung. We don't know whether she was aware of his work. Her writings suggest that she was familiar with Jung's thought; <u>The Secret of Childhood</u> particularly encourages this idea. It is my

speculation that, as a woman current with psychological thought, she could not have been entirely ignorant of his work.

This similarity of thought can perhaps be imputed to the fact that when two people look at the same thing and have a vision of "knowing," their vision will be the same. Still, the similarity seems beyond chance, and, in the interest of historical conundrum, we may consider it possible that Montessori was familiar with Jung's writing. After all, these are Montessori's own words and she is talking about archetypal patterns.

Now I would like to move on to the more practical aspects of how these ideas fit into our work in the classroom, or the psychological consulting room.

As a psychoanalyst my work with children is based on my training as a Montessori teacher and as a Jungian analyst. I combine the two disciplines in a way that seems to follow the thought of both, for the two bodies of thought complement each other so naturally. Both, for instance, prefer a non-interventionist approach. Montessori's techniques trained me to be a diligent, thoughtful, patient observer of the child. Jung's theory, that we learn to trust the self (the regulatory center of the personality and the archetype of wholeness and of order) to trust the needs of the psyche, gives a psychological basis for the effectiveness of this technique. In capsule, I found that a child will respond to careful observation by showing me what it needs--psychically--physically--cognitively. Clinically, as I observe a child in my office it is as if the <u>special quality</u> of this observation is palpable to the child; the young psyche senses that it has been <u>met</u> somewhere on a very deep level. Whether we speak of the special qualities of listening in analysis with adults or of diligent observation with children, the person experiences the analyst's or teacher's presence and feels met. By being observed somehow the

psyche knows that it is being seen. To be seen is to feel that the observer knows who one is. Observation is not a passive way of looking or of simply recording activities and actions -- it is an active participation. To observe is to <u>be with</u> someone. We are all familiar with the need to observe in the Montessori method--the need to know where the child's psyche is and where the education of the child has to progress. Our being there in this active understanding way is the very essence of Montessori theory. Similarly, in Jungian psychotherapy we meet the psyche and we let it speak to us through imagery, dreams and the issues of an individual's life, but also with the intent to observe it. (What is important for anyone is to be seen as one truly is. It is the only thing that really matters.) To observe is to be an active, though not intrusive, participant in someone's self development. As in the child's process of education, the psyche tells the analyst what it wants and needs. We as observers then supply the necessary materials, be it an interpretation in psychoanalysis or a particular educational material that will maximize the child's own self-healing, self-teaching mechanism. That is what we do when we observe.

I cannot force myself into the psyche of a child. I have to wait until it beckons me to join it in its less formed, less structured world. One can force neither learning nor healing--one can only provide a place where they can happen. Part of this "place," so to speak, is what Montessori called "the prepared environment." We all know the importance of preparing an environment containing materials that will facilitate the child's inner work, a place where the child's inner world can be acted out. Montessori believed that the <u>order of the environment was the grounding point for the psyche</u>. The child's own natural inner ability to order responds to the outer order of the environment

and the inner order of the teacher. By "order," I mean not only where things belong or how to work with them, but meaningfulness--bringing meaning into something that is confusing. Order is a product not only of things having their right place but of things being comprehensible, hence meaningful. Order in the environment is important because it mirrors the child's growth from chaos into order.

This is true primarily because the child is in a state of intense participation or identification with its world. In Jungian psychology we call this "participation mystique." In other words, the child is much closer to its unconscious than is an adult. A child is still undifferentiated: the boundaries between the "I-thou" and "I-it" are not as fully formed as they are in an adult. Therefore, for the child, the things of the world carry the meaning of the world. The proper environment is one where the child's own natural creative processes can take hold. The environment is prepared for the greater needs of self construction. Montessori said

> "The secret of the free development of the child consists in organizing the means necessary for his internal nourishment, means corresponding to a primitive impulse of the child....It is in the satisfaction of the primitive impulse, this internal hunger, that the child's personality begins to organize itself." (Spontaneous Activity in Education, page 70)

It is the job of the teacher both to structure the environment and to meet the child on a level of its primitive impulse so as to enable the impulse in a sense to evolve. That is what I mean by observation, what I mean by enabling. (In Jungian psychology we would say "primordial potential" rather than "primitive impulse.") The establishment of the I-thou relationship for a child evolves in terms of its connection with parents and/or teachers. As I have said, the teacher is the observing participant in this process. The teacher

enters the less formed world of childhood and is for the child whatever the child needs an adult to be.

In the psychological consulting room or the classroom this environment is crucial. The unfolding psychic development of the child is contained and supported, beckoned and welcomed in it, but never judged as good or bad, right or wrong. The teacher, like the analyst, simply regards it as it is. This is what it means to enable, or to "meet" the child; this is what enables growth. The teacher can provide a structure (or "container," as analysts say) onto which the child can project his own as yet unconscious structure. Therefore the environment becomes a container for the potential of the child. The child projects his becoming onto the teacher, and the teacher takes th[illegible] becoming and mirrors it back to the child, so the child can see what it is. Through skillful manipulation of the materials and through knowing where the child is, so to speak, you can reflect back to the child that which is necessary for the psyche to move itself beyond, and to grow. In view of the present day psychological emphasis on narcissism and abandonment issues in the child and adult, Montessori Education can be a therapeutic setting or healing environment for a child in a troubled world, a world that doesn't reflect back to him who he is.

Montessori spoke of the importance of the self-knowledge of the teacher. She stressed that the educational processes of the child depended on what sort of a person the teacher was. The following quote illustrates how necessary it is for the teacher to know herself, to know the blockages or complexes within her own self so that they will not hinder her work with a child:

> "The real preparation for educators is the study of one's self. The training of the teacher who is to help life (unfold) is something far more than the learning of ideas (or theories). It includes the training of character; it is a preparation of the spirit." The Absorbent Mind (1964) p. 132.

A further quote:

> "The adult must often find in himself the hitherto unknown error that prevents him from seeing the child as he is."

Thus, the person who makes an effective Montessori teacher is not only someone who knows the technique or method, but somebody who knows her own blind spots, strengths, weaknesses--in short, the person who knows herself. To know one's own limitations is to know these blind spots with regard to those one teaches, because these blind spots (or unconsciousness) are what block understanding of other people. We all have our own unconscious scars from sensitive periods unfulfilled in our own lives; our own unmet needs of childhood get activated when we work with children. In an important paper titled "The Therapeutic Value of Abreaction," Jung asks, "How can the [child] learn to abandon his neurotic subterfuges when he sees us playing hide and seek with our own personality, as though unable, for fear of being thought inferior, to drop the professional mask of authority, competence, and superior knowledge?" We can hide behind these qualities of authority, competence, and superior knowledge as a defense for our own insecurity. (Adults don't always know when we are being phony, but a child does, every time.) Of course, a child has a right to expect these qualities in its teacher, but it will see them in the teacher only if they are genuine.

In the Psychology of the Transference (1946), Jung says, "for two personalities to meet is like mixing two chemical substances, if there is any combination at all both are transformed." Jung thought that therapy resulted in an interaction between patient and therapist that was like alchemy. I believe that a classroom has this same kind of alchemical mix, the combination of which produces either peace, harmony, and learning, or chaos without the

full possibility for learning. If the teacher knows herself, then she is free to know the child. Jung stated it directly--both parties in an interaction change. The teacher and the child both change, for theirs is an interactive environment. If we don't know ourselves well enough, and if there is a lot of darkness around us, things become chaotic. Therefore, it is unencumbent upon the teacher to know as much as possible about herself so that the child can discover who it is. Jung says, "no one who does not know himself can know others." (C.W. 10, Para. 35) The inner discipline of the teacher is what the child responds to--not what the teacher does or suggests. (What the child responds to is not your suggestion, but you.) Thus, good therapy or good teaching is not technique or method exclusively, it is simply "being." Jung and Montessori were themselves prime examples of this truth. They were marvelous teachers because they strove to know themselves. Their striving became the essence of their charisma.

Wouldn't it therefore be reasonable, even essential, for us as educators really to examine oursleves as frequently as possible, to examine our own interaction with the children? Were we helpful, we can ask. Were we empathic? Did we observe what the child needed or did we act out of our own needs?

However simple this sounds, it is difficult to discover. But, after all, what else do we have as a tool but our own selves, our own personalities? Let me give an example. One of the great discoveries of psychoanalysis is the idea that we all have within us a child. Whenever you work with another person a child makes an appearance. When you work with children a child is there in the flesh. When you work with adults in therapy, a child is there in the distress--because adults don't get distressed, the child in the adult gets distressed. One of the pitfalls I have discovered in my work both as a

Montessori teacher and as a Jungian analyst is, as I've noted, that when I work with children, the child in me gets activated. That activation makes for empathy. I know what the outer child feels. The danger is that I can get stuck there and not know enough about my own inner child and where its wounds are. So it is necessary for me frequently to care for this inner child because it forms a part of my personality. For instance, one of my patients was a very disturbed boy whose ego needed building. He was working out his rage through war games we played together with small figures. He couldn't let me win--he would change the rules or do something to prevent my winning. This was hard for me because I wanted to win, too. I sat and played this game for six months and never got to win. Had I not taken care of my inner child, its frustration would have ruined my ability to help the boy. When he could eventually begin to let me win, it was the beginning of his learning how to give.

Here is another example, this time from the classroom. There may be some sensitive period for learning that you yourself were not able to utilize and experience. This might come out unconsciously as a desire to have the child you are working with "do it right" or be so unconscious as to completely skip over it. Let's say, for instance, that you missed the sensitive period for acquiring reading. Your own issue about this might appear in your environment in the language section. Either there would be few exercises or half the room could be filled with exercises of preparation for reading. (When one looks at the materials in an environment one can tell as much about the teacher as where the children are in their development.) We need to be very aware of ourselves and our own development, as I have said, and we need to observe ourselves.

Good education is good therapy. I don't want you to underestimate the therapeutic role of the teacher. The teacher is the first therapist beyond the

parents, and the teacher has the opportunity to encourage the formation of the child's psyche, which will be with him the rest of his life. You will have him in the classroom for 3 of the 6 most important years of his early formation.

In volume 3 of his Collected Works, Jung states that "The thing that really matters is the personal commitment, the serious purpose, the devotion, indeed the self-sacrifice of those who give help. How different is this from what we have learned from Montessori? They are talking about the same thing.

Let me just recollect some of the points of this talk. In the first place there is a shared historical tradition or interface between psychoanalysis and The Montessori Method. Montessori had a brief contact with Anna Freud. Her student Lili Peller made a contribution to children both as a teacher and as an analyst. There is a natural connection between the two endeavors. However, early on, Montessori recognized that the limitations of psychoanalytic theory did not account for the kind of innate potential that she saw in the psyche. This is the point at which a consideration of the psychology of C.G. Jung is valuable. We have looked at the connections and where they interlock--especially in the ideas of the archetypes, the spiritual embryo, and sensitive periods. These are patterns of learning and apprehension.

It is my conclusion, then, that Jung's empirical discoveries of the way the psyche works give credence to what Montessori was trying to achieve in the classrooom. It seems to me that if Montessori education were more widespread those of us who work in the consulting room would see less of the neurotic problem that arises because people are cut off from themselves in childhood.

In the final analysis, whenever you deal with the deeper nature of the individual you are dealing with inherent potential. It is your job to create the space and the possibility for the evolution of this potential in the child.

Jung and Montessori were looking at the same thing: how to maximize the creative potential of people. Montessori happened to deal with very young people. Jung happened normally to deal with much older people. But creative potential is creative potential--it comes through the evolution of order out of chaos and it comes through interaction between human beings who possess and cultivate self-knowledge.

My purpose in presenting these ideas to you is not to show how important Jung is for Montessori or how Montessori should have known Jung. Rather, I have had two purposes: One, to show how great minds which deal with depth so often talk about the same experience: two, to begin a dialogue between Montessori education and Jungian psychology so that we can see how two disciplines that seem mutually exclusive are not really mutually exclusive at all, but in fact consider the same thing--the well-being, growth, and development of the human soul.